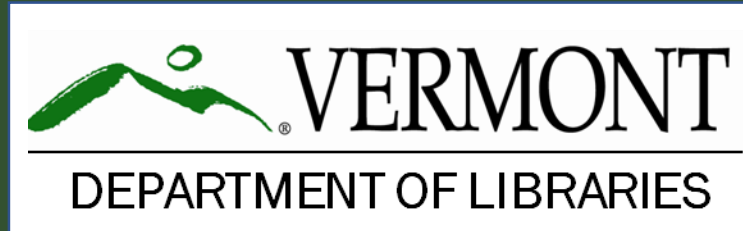


Trustee Board Training



Lara Keenan

State Library Consultant, Governance & Management

September 2019

Why Do Public Libraries Exist? VSA Title 22

Chapter 3, § 67

(a) The General Assembly declares it to be the policy of the State of Vermont that **free public libraries are essential** to the general enlightenment of citizens in a democracy and that every citizen of the State of Vermont should have access to the educational, cultural, recreational, informational, and research benefits of a free public library.

What is the Primary Duty of the Trustees?

Well-Being of the Library

Primary Responsibility of Trustees

Well-Being of the Library

- Understand the community and its needs
- Understand the law & avoid Conflict of Interest
- Exercise discretion and respect confidentiality outside board meetings
- Put personal agendas aside when making decisions
- Plan for the future: Resilience

OVERSIGHT



Source:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicholas_t/10250370544/

DAILY MANAGEMENT



Source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/amon-ra123m5/5624590992/>

Library Board Basic Tasks - Oversight

- Policy & Bylaws
- Advocate
- Strategic/long-range planning
- Promote & evaluate library
- Hire, fire, & evaluate a director
- Budget & funding sources
- Building/Grounds Safety & Vibe
- Community Link



Director Basic Tasks – Daily Management

- Daily operations & budget management
- Hire, train, supervise, & fire staff
- Connect public with information
- Select materials
- Track materials & members
- Implement policies
- Keep & report statistics
- Inform board of trends & local implications
- Act as spokesperson at meetings & with Press



Comparison of Roles

Trustees

- Hire/Supervise Director
- Create Long-Range/Strategic Plan
- Fiscal Oversight, Budget Approval
- Approve All Policies
- Ensure Library Has a Marketing Plan

OVERSIGHT

Library Director

- Hire/Supervise Staff
- Create/Implement Plan
- Create, Spend, Report on Budget
- Recommend/Implement Policies
- Coordinate/Implement Marketing Plan

DAILY MANAGEMENT

Ongoing Trustee Duties

Ongoing Trustee Duties

Prepare for
board meetings;
attend &
participate

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mmmavocado/10925542573>



Ongoing Trustee Duties

Get to know the
legal stuff: State
& Federal Laws

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/pamwood707/5646757752>



Ongoing Trustee Duties

Support Library Services: Visit & Observe

Source: San Jose Public Library
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sanjoselibrary/31234520260>



Ongoing Trustee Duties

Talk About the Library in the Community

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/90664717@N00/2686040967>



Ongoing Trustee Duties

Keep open to the future: read, think, listen

Source:

<http://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/future/engage/TrendCards>



Each card includes information about the trend and considerations for why it might matter for libraries.

The trends are color-coded into broad categories of change:



What Laws Govern Your Work?

Why Do Public Libraries Exist? VSA Title 22

Chapter 3, § 67

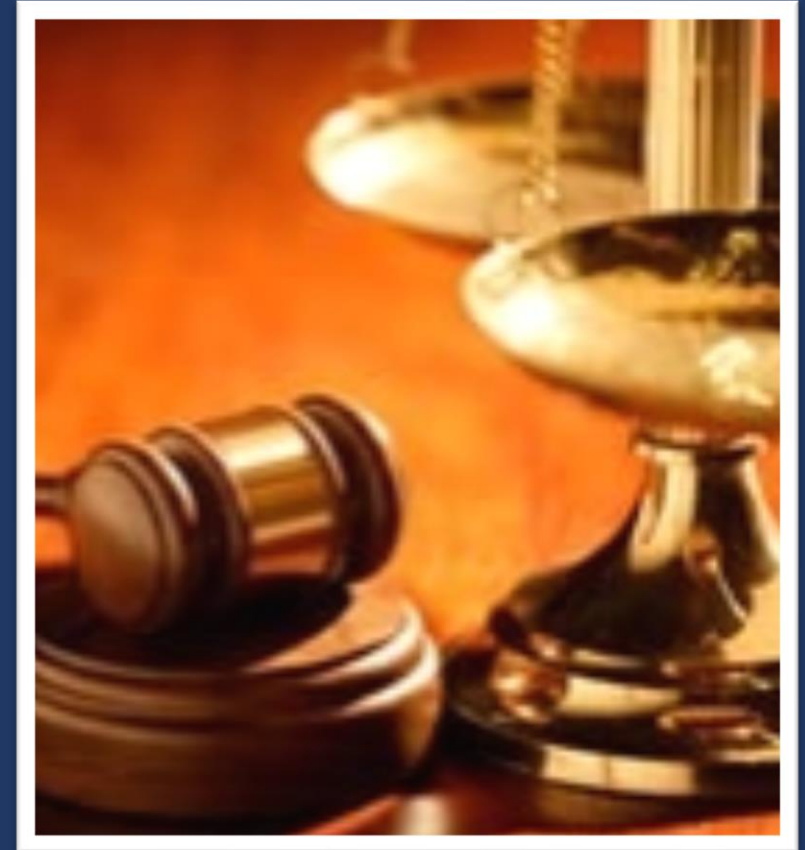
(a) The General Assembly declares it to be the policy of the State of Vermont that **free public libraries are essential** to the general enlightenment of citizens in a democracy and that every citizen of the State of Vermont should have access to the educational, cultural, recreational, informational, and research benefits of a free public library.

Division of Powers: Trustees & SelectBoard

- Important: We Are All In This Together
- Also Important: Knowing The Law of Public Libraries
 - Municipal Library Trustees: “Shall have full power” 22 V.S.A. § 143
 - Incorporated Library Trustees: “have control and management of the affairs and property of the corporation” 22 V.S.A. § 105
- It’s a delicate balance to maintain and nurture

Who Is In Charge?

- Know Your Library's Sources of Authority
- Become Familiar with the Law of Public Libraries
- Our Laws Do Not Address Every Possible Scenario
- Work Together on Behalf of Your Community
- When In Doubt, Consult Your Legal Counsel



Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/99558277@N07/10875349695/>

Ideas for Working Together

Community Needs Assessment

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/airbnb/13915193802/>



Ideas for Working Together

Community-Wide Initiatives

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/niallkennedy/9587071278/>



Ideas for Working Together

Research Assistance & Information Dissemination

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/pamwood707/5646757752>



How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries serve as a
Community Hub -
bringing the entire
community
together



Source: Burnham Mem. Lib. Facebook Page

How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries are vital
to a functioning
democracy



Varnum Memorial Library, Cambridge

How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries provide a **space** for educational, social, cultural, and recreational engagement



Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sanjoselibrary/31234520260>

How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries help your taxpayers connect with local government.



South Burlington Public Library

How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries are the
ultimate
renewable
resource



Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/awesomelibraryservices/16393118653>

How Libraries Benefit Your Community

Libraries Offer a
Fantastic ROI*

*Library Value Calculator
[http://www.ala.org/advocacy/
library-value-calculator](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/library-value-calculator)



Source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/143843618@N03>

Laws: State, Federal, Local, & ALA Guidelines

- Wide Range of Laws & Guidelines to Follow
- Similar to Running a Small Business
- See Handout – “Trustee Training: Laws That Govern Your Work”
- Important to Read and Understand ALA Guidelines:
 - Code of Ethics
 - Freedom to Read & Library Bill of Rights

What are the Fiduciary
Duties of the Trustees?

Duty of Care or Diligence

Behave in the
best interests of
the library



Duty of Loyalty

Avoid conflict
between duty to
the library &
self-interest



Duty of Obedience

Understand the
Statutes, Charter,
and Bylaws



What Laws Should Govern Trustee Meetings?

What Rules Govern Meetings?

- Roberts Rules of Order – if by-laws demand it
- Note: Roberts Rules are not required by VT statute
- VT Open Meeting Law for municipal libraries
- VT Open Meeting Law for incorporated libraries that wish to meet the VT Minimum Standards for Public Libraries
- Norms or ground rules set by the board

When Does Open Meeting Law Apply?

A **quorum** of the board meets to **discuss library business**



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/9111274504>

When Does Open Meeting Law Apply?

An official committee of the board meets to discuss library business



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/9111274504>

What is the Point of Open Meeting Law?

Give the public a fair & open opportunity to participate in discussions of, & decisions made by, their government



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/9111274504>

What is the Point of Open Meeting Law?

Make Government More
Transparent



Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwwworks/9111274504>



Requirements of Open Meeting Law

- Provide advance notice
- Create & post an agenda
- Conduct business in open meeting
- Allow public comment
- Record & post minutes
- Respond to violation complaints
- Vote by roll call (electronic participation & not unanimous)
- Follow executive session rules

Source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/149902454@N08/35417844812>



Agenda Posting

- Regular Meetings: 48 hours in advance
- Special Meetings: 24 hours in advance
- Emergency Meetings – rare; only for situations requiring immediate attention
- Post on/in:
 - website that the public body designates
 - municipal office
 - 2 other places designated by municipality



Minutes

- Public Records
- Available within 5 Calendar Days
- Names of Board Members & Active Participants
- All motions, proposals, resolutions, & results of votes
- Not a transcript: “true indication of the business of the meeting”



Executive Session: How To

- Make a motion: indicate reason, state statutory provision
- Vote must pass by majority to enter
- Chair asks public to exit
- Board may invite staff, clerks, legal counsel, & persons whose information is needed to stay

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lenzmoser/20849912438>



Inside Executive Session

- Discuss issue; make no decisions
- Discuss only subject matter of motion
- Decisions from discussion must be voted on outside of executive session

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lenzmoser/20849912438>

The Unintended Meeting

Discussing problems, solutions, & other library business over email or text with a quorum



Fundraising

What about the Friends Group?

- Separate entity from the library
- Establish MOU between Friends and Trustees
- Differentiate types of fundraising done by each group & help public understand
- Engage the Friends in Strategic Planning

Fundraising

- What types are needed?
 - Annual Campaign
 - 1-on-1 Donor Development
 - Capital Campaign
 - Endowment Drive
 - Bequests/Planned Giving
 - Book Sales
 - Events
 - Grants



Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/143843618@N03>

Bequests, Endowments, & Other Large Monetary Gifts

- Importance of Being Responsible Stewards of Funds for the Future Viability of the Library
- Work with a Financial Advisor
- VT Community Foundation
 - Nonprofit Entity
 - Designated Funds Option
 - Works with Donors to Set up Funds
 - Works with Many Libraries



Why Do You Need a Gift Acceptance Policy?

- Protect the Library
 - Legal Liabilities
 - Undesired Restrictions
 - Unforeseen Consequences
- Set Up the Library to Succeed in the Future
- Establish Guidelines & Consistency for Donors
- Donors Expect It (especially those giving large gifts)



Fundraising

- Do you need a fundraising consultant?
 - Feasibility study & Follow-Up Work
- Are you set up to fundraise?
 - Gift Acceptance Policy
 - Appropriate Accounts Established
 - Record-Keeping System
 - Donor Management System
 - Clear and Inspiring Statement of Need



Fundraising

- What is worth the effort, and what do you (& the community) have capacity for?
- What is your overall strategy?
- Build the leadership team & train to the role
 - Visionaries/Honorary Members
 - Askers
 - Worker Bees
 - Others?



Best Practices for Library Trustees

A green road sign with white text. The sign is rectangular and mounted on a metal pole. The background is a blue sky with light clouds. The sign is positioned on the right side of the image, partially overlapping a dark blue curved shape on the left.

**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/the-seo-company/8114460868>

Provide Orientation for New Board Members



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Understand & Follow Open Meeting Law



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Stick to Your Meeting Agenda



Allow All Trustees to Have a Voice in Meetings



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Commit Time Outside of Board Meetings



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Empower the Director to Manage the Day-to-Day Operations of the Library



Provide a Unified Vision & Mission



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Have a Unified Voice in the Community



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Become Informed about Library Issues



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Represent the Library in Your Community



**BEST
PRACTICE**

STRAIGHT AHEAD

What Is Succession Planning?



Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/28537647@N06/2887726958>



Planning for the Future Governance of Your Library

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mscapriel/5966121>



What are the Skills, Talents, & Attributes that Our Board Needs?

Source:

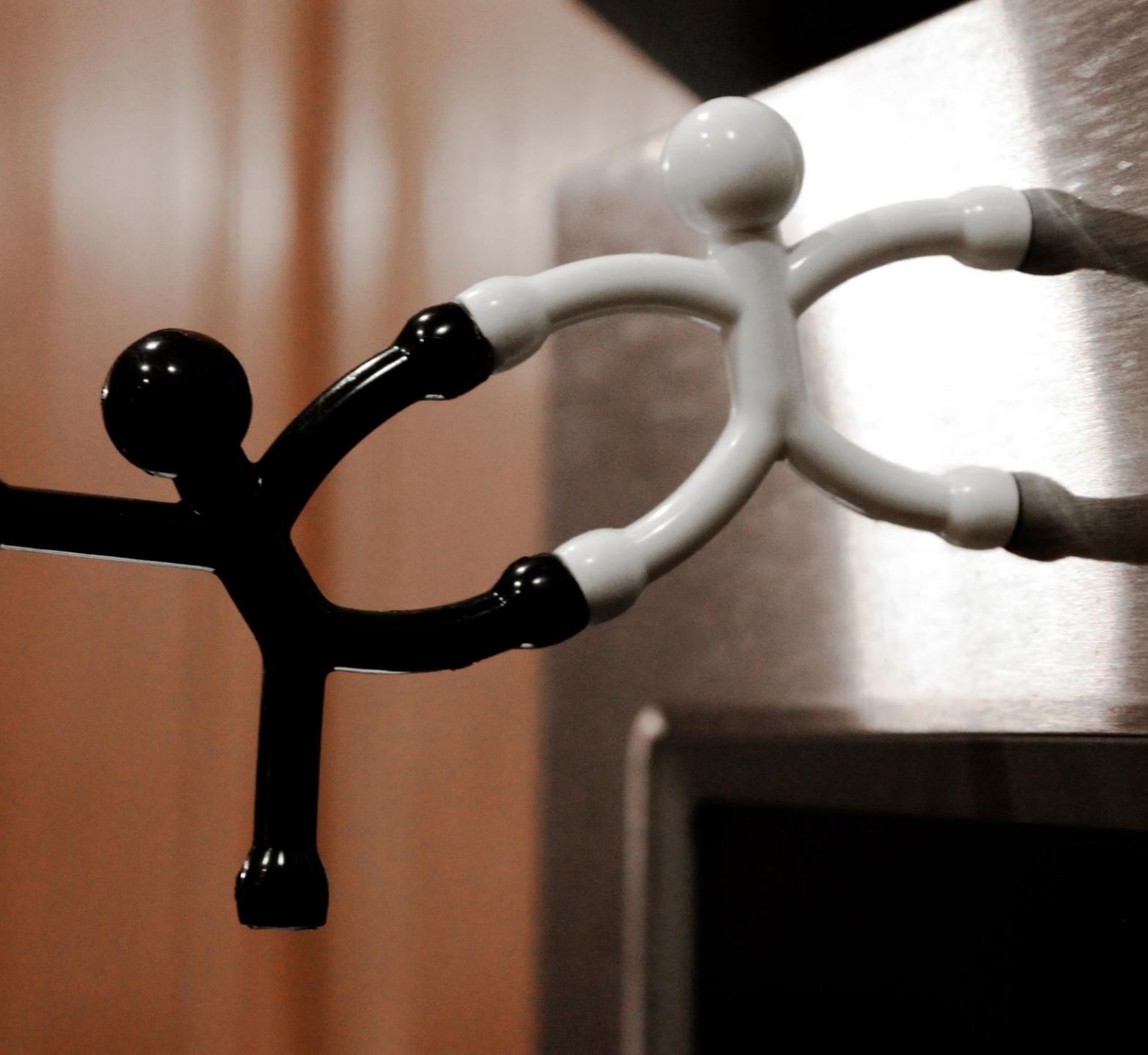
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/jenniferwilliams/7289560470>



How Do We Find People with these Skills, Talents, & Attributes?

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/stevepj2009/6857101082>



**Once We've
Found Them,
How Do We
Attract Them
to the Board?**

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/brendan-c/5388970247>

Board Planning Matrix				
		Name	Name	Name
Gender				
Female				
35-50				
Age				
19-34				
35-50				
51-65				
66+				
Race/Ethnicity				
African American/Black				
Asian/Pacific Islander				
Caucasian				
Hispanic/Latino				
Native American/Indian				
Other				
Community Connections				
Religious organizations				
Corporate				
Education				
Media				
Political				
Philanthropy (Community Volunteers)				
Small business				
Social services				

United for Libraries

www.ala.org/united

Qualities	
Leadership skills/motivator	
Willingness to work/availability	
Personal connection to the mission	
Personal Style	
Consensus builder	
Good communicator	
Strategist	
Visionary	
Bridge builder	
Areas of Expertise	
Administration/Management	
Entrepreneurship	
Financial management: Accounting	
Financial management: Investments	
Fundraising	
Government	
Law	
Marketing, public relations	
Human resources	
Strategic planning	
Physical plant (architect, engineer)	
Real estate	
Special program focus (education, health, etc.)	
Technology	
Other	
Number of years (Terms on the board)	
Board-Elected (BE) or Commission-Elected (CE)	

United for Libraries

www.ala.org/united



Job Descriptions for Board Officers

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/29792566@N08/6140852961>



Calendar Detailing Yearly Tasks

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/dafnecholet/5374200948>

A wooden gavel with a polished, multi-tiered head and a smooth handle, resting diagonally across a white document. The document contains text about traffic flow control, including terms like 'circles', 'lanes', 'traffic densities', and 'yellow'. The background is a dark blue gradient.

Updated Bylaws

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/60588258@N00/3293465641>



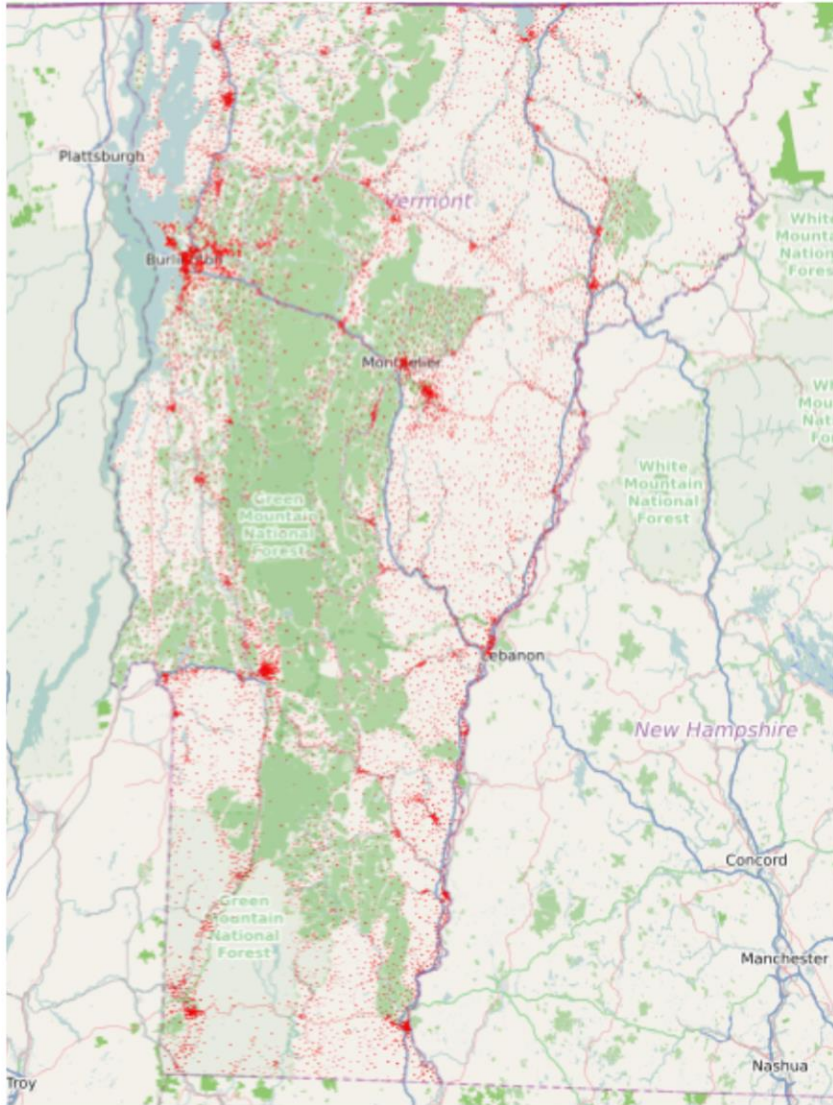
What if your library director resigns?

Source: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/127226743@N02/26616054891>



How do you know if
Your Library
meets the needs of its
patrons?

Community Needs
Assessment as an
Integral Part of
Strategic Planning



Initial Information Gathering: Community Assessments By Others & Census Data



What other local groups have done a community needs assessment/survey recently?

- Town Plan? Town Department Effort?
- Another Nonprofit, Civic, or Religious Organization?
- What did they learn that you can build from?

Source:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nwplanning/30130854111/>



Census Data

- Michael Moser – UVM Center for Rural Studies
 - 802-656-0864
 - Michael.Moser@uvm.edu
- American Community Survey: 5-year Increment Sampling of Census Data (for smaller towns):
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs>

The Importance of Turning Outward:



Expert Knowledge vs.
Public/Community Knowledge



How Do You Find Out Your Community's Needs?

- Focus Groups?
- Surveys? – How administer? Where administer?
- Go out into the community? – grocery, coffee shop, farmer's market, community events, etc.
- Go to community meetings? – Rotary, PTA, Church Groups, etc.
- What questions do you ask, how do you ask them, and who does the asking?

Meeting Community Needs

- How do you assess the current and future needs of your community? Why is this important to do?
- Which of these needs should (and can) be addressed by the library, given the library's limitations?
- Should the library partner with other organizations to meet certain needs? (Create library advocates)
- How does the library's mission statement/vision help guide you to an answer? Strategic Planning?

Your Library's Mission Statement

Community Needs & Strategic Planning

- Aspen Institute Action Guide V. 2.0:
http://www.libraryvision.org/download_action_guide
- Harwood Institute Turning Outward Tools:
<http://theharwoodinstitute.org/tools/>
 - ALA Turning Outward Tools for Libraries:
<http://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/libraries-transforming-communities/resources-for-library-professionals>
- VT Department of Libraries Professional Collection



Advocacy: Community Connections

- Talking up your library & getting others to talk up your library
- Talking Points you can use & get others to use on your behalf.
- Solicit Patron Stories to Share: How has the library changed your life? What do you love about the library?

Source:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/volunteermatch/27677155485/>

Advocacy: Community Connections

- United for Libraries: Power Guide for Successful Advocacy: <http://www.ala.org/united/powerguide>
- Turning the Page Library Advocacy Training: <http://www.publiclibraryadvocacy.org/>
- Tribute: Library Patrons Expressing Love – Pierson Library: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xFwS4_cllJo

Future of Public Libraries

- “Community Hub”
- Access to New Types of:
 - Resources
 - Programs
 - Services
- Altering the “Look and Feel” of the Library

The Work of Library Trustees

- Vital to Our Democracy
- Vital to Our Communities
- Vital to Our Citizens

Thank you for the work you do!

Contact Me

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